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DE RUEHMN #0083 0511719  
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O 201719Z FEB 08  
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7967  
INFO RUCNMR/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 000083

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/19/2018  
TAGS: PGOV PREL KVPR UNMIK UN YI EU UY  
SUBJECT: URUGUAY ON U.S. DECISION TO RECOGNIZE KOSOVO'S  
INDEPENDENCE

REF: A. A. STATE 16319  
1B. B. MONTEVIDEO 0076  
1C. C. MONTEVIDEO 0068  
1D. D. MONTEVIDEO 0016

Classified By: Ambassador Frank E. Baxter  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) On February 19, the Ambassador delivered ref A  
demarche to Deputy Foreign Minister Maria "Belela" Herrera,  
Director General for Political Affairs Alvaro Gallardo and  
Political Advisor Federico Gomensoro. (Note: Embassy  
consciously chose not to meet with the anti-American Foreign  
Minister Reinaldo Gargano who will be replaced on March 1 -  
reftel C. End Note.) After stressing the need for the GOU to  
move quickly to recognize Kosovo's independence, the  
Ambassador underscored Uruguay's long-standing support for  
human rights. He reminded his interlocutors that the history  
of ethnic cleansing and crimes against civilians were  
important factors in the decision to recognize Kosovo's  
independence and support for UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari's  
plan for international supervision.

12. (C) After listening attentively to the various points in  
the demarche, Hererra said that the GOU well understood the  
rationale behind President Bush's February 18 decision to  
recognize Kosovo as an independent country. However, she also  
stated that Uruguay "was not urged" to take any decision for  
or against Kosovo's independence "at this time", on direct  
instructions from the Foreign Minister. Herrera and Gallardo  
also cited various reassons why Uruguay would remain  
"neutral" for the time being, including: (a) that Kosovo is a  
"hot issue" at the moment, (b) that the MFA is being lobbied  
by other (unspecified) ambassadors on both sides of the  
issue, (c) that there are no Serbs or Kosovars here in  
Uruguay to press their respective cases and (d) because  
Uruguay does not yet know the positions of other MERCOSUR and  
GRULAC countries. Gallardo added that it would have been  
vastly easier to sign on to something that had been agreed  
upon by both Belgrade and Pristina.

COMMENT

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13. (C) After the meeting was over, Deputy Foreign Minister  
Herrera personally escorted the Ambassador to the elevator  
where she privately described to him "how horrible" it had  
been to work for Gargano and that she had only agreed to  
remain in her job out of a sense of duty. Herrera said that  
it was possible that the GOU's "wait and see" attitude on

Kosovo could change once Gonzalo Fernandez took over as the  
new Foreign Minister on March 1. End Comment.  
Baxter